



Quarterly Report

Year 8, Quarter 1

April - June 2020

Quarter 1 overview

The team at Healthwatch North Lincolnshire continued to offer their support to help in the ongoing coronavirus crisis during quarter 1. This meant the continuation of the telephone buddy service which was extended to reach out to people with a Learning disability and / or autism.

The daily good news report also continued during the quarter to help support peoples understanding of the latest guidelines and to give a snapshot of good news to help balance out any negativity from usual press channels.

The volunteer coordinator post was filled on a temporary basis, and the post holder and Healthwatch North Lincolnshire are happy for this arrangement to continue on a longer term basis.

The Healthwatch Annual report was completed during quarter 1 and published at the end of June.

Outcome 1 - High public awareness of HWNL and the services it provides

Under normal circumstances, our team are very visible at events across the County and at our usual engagement locations such as the hospital and the ironstone centre, however as the restrictions on face to face contact remained in place during the quarter, there was no opportunity to carry out our usual engagement activity.

This meant that we needed to find more creative ways of reaching out to the local population.

Virtual engagement

Our team usually carry out visits to Sir John Mason House every 6 weeks, to understand the experiences of people who have had recent contact with health services and are now needing rehabilitation before returning home.

In quarter 1 we decided to trial this on a virtual basis. Residents were asked if they would like to book a slot with the patient experience officer where they could share their recent experiences.

Four residents booked on to the session and welcomed the interaction from our team via video call.

This type of engagement will be used more frequently in the coming months and the engagement officer has sessions booked with Lindsey Lodge Hospice, the Macular society and Macmillan cancer support group in quarter 2.

Social media

The use of social media to create interactive and engaging posts became more crucial than ever during this time. Social media is used by Healthwatch North Lincolnshire to raise the profile of the service and the services that we offer. We also use social media to keep people up to date with changes to local services and encourage participation in our work.


Top performing posts in Q1

Tweet activity

Healthwatch N Lincs @HealthwatchNL
Children and young people aged 11-25 in North Lincolnshire can now access Kooth -a free, anonymous, online counselling service.

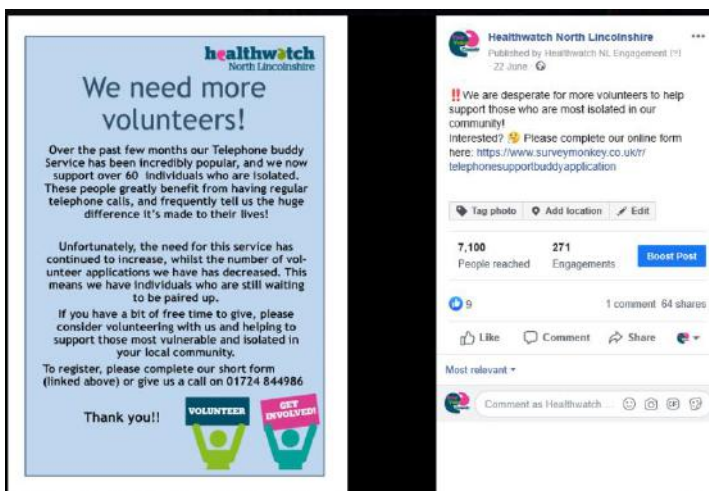
Users are able to speak to a trained counsellor, receive peer-to-peer support, and track their progress.

Visit <https://kooth.com/> for more info

 **Reach a bigger audience**
Get more engagements by promoting this Tweet!

Get started

This tweet was used to share the new mental health online platform for young people that was launched in April 2020. It reached 1989 people on Twitter.



healthwatch
North Lincolnshire

We need more volunteers!

Over the past few months our Telephone buddy Service has been incredibly popular, and we now support over 60 individuals who are isolated. These people greatly benefit from having regular telephone calls, and frequently tell us the huge difference it's made to their lives!

Unfortunately, the need for this service has continued to increase, whilst the number of volunteer applications we have decreased. This means we have individuals who are still waiting to be paired up.

If you have a bit of free time to give, please consider volunteering with us and helping to support those most vulnerable and isolated in your local community.

To register, please complete our short form (linked above) or give us a call on 01724 844986

Thank you!!

VOLUNTEER **GET INVOLVED!**

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire
Published by Healthwatch NL Engagement (P) · 22 June

!! We are desperate for more volunteers to help support those who are most isolated in our community! Interested? 🙋 Please complete our online form here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/telephonesupportbuddyapplication>

Tag photo · Add location · Edit

7,100 People reached · 271 Engagements · Boost Post

9 · 1 comment · 64 shares

Like · Comment · Share

Most relevant

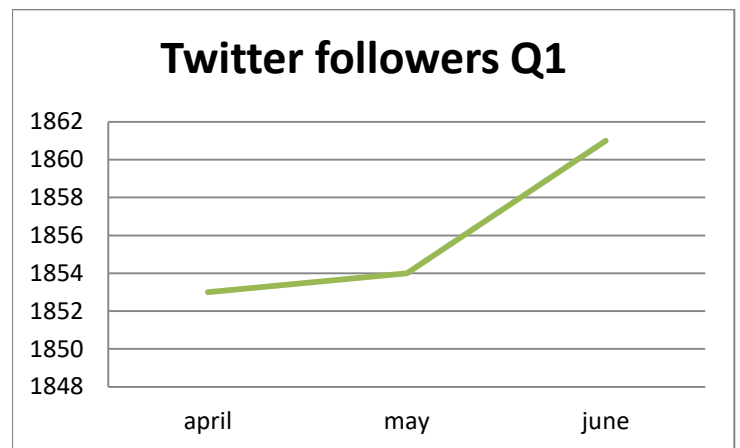
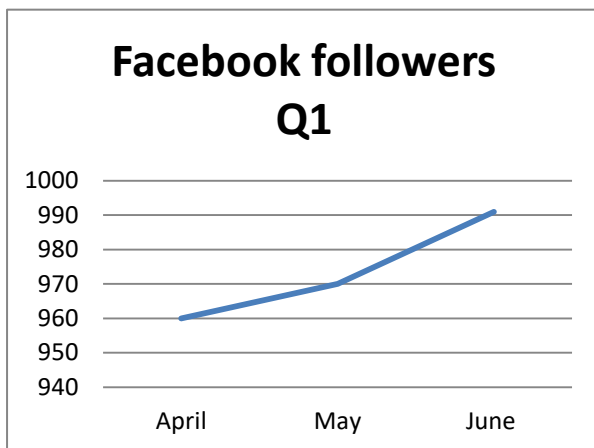
Comment as Healthwatch

This Facebook post was an appeal to recruit more volunteers as we had seen an increase in new service users. The post reached 7000 people and resulted in 6 more people applying to volunteer with us.



This Instagram post was designed to encourage as many people as possible to take part in our short survey about their mental health.

We saw an increase in the number of followers on Facebook and twitter during quarter 1. This was a result of increased social media presence and more interactive posts.



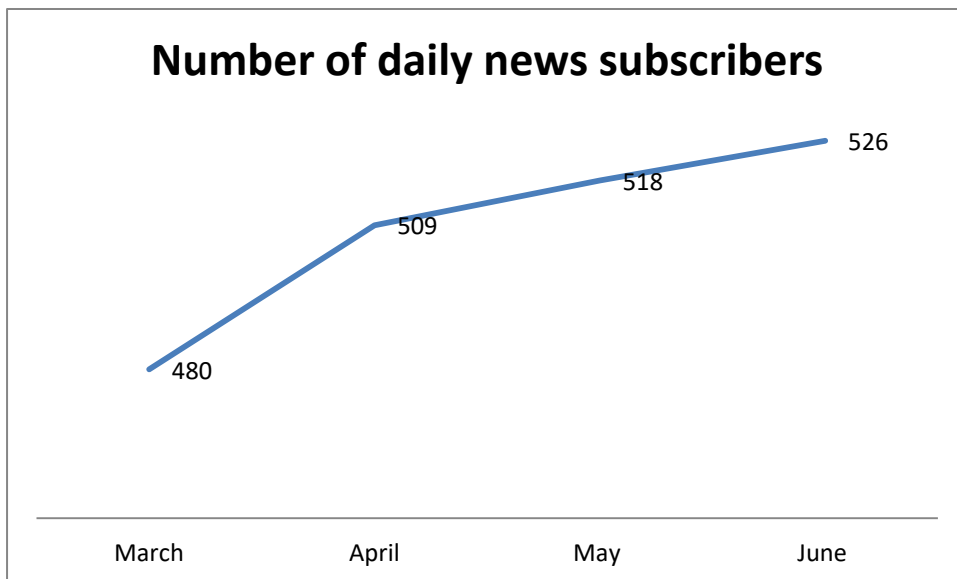
During quarter 1, we continued to publish the daily good news report. This began at the end of quarter 4 and is sent to all e-newsletter subscribers on a daily basis. When it began, the purpose of the report was to inform our followers of the rapidly changing guidelines and to provide a bit of light relief from the bleak news that was prominent in the media.

The brief e-news contains positive quotes, a short general news summary, followed by a number of positive articles - both global and local. We also include a daily activity such as a word search, riddles, or number puzzles to give the recipients something to do.

Overall, the daily report has been well-received and HWNL have received a lot of positive feedback on it.

As the situation evolved and the relaxing of the restrictions began, we started to receive more phone calls to the team from members of the public who were unsure about what they should and shouldn't do in their daily lives.

It became evident that this daily news report has become even more relevant, and we will be continuing to circulate this to our subscribers, and encourage more people to sign up to receive it on a daily basis.



Festival of wellbeing

Unfortunately our annual festival of wellbeing has been cancelled for 2020. There was no possibility of holding a public event in the current circumstances. The engagement officer looked at different ways that the event could be held virtually and asked stallholders if they would like to be involved, but only a handful came forward.

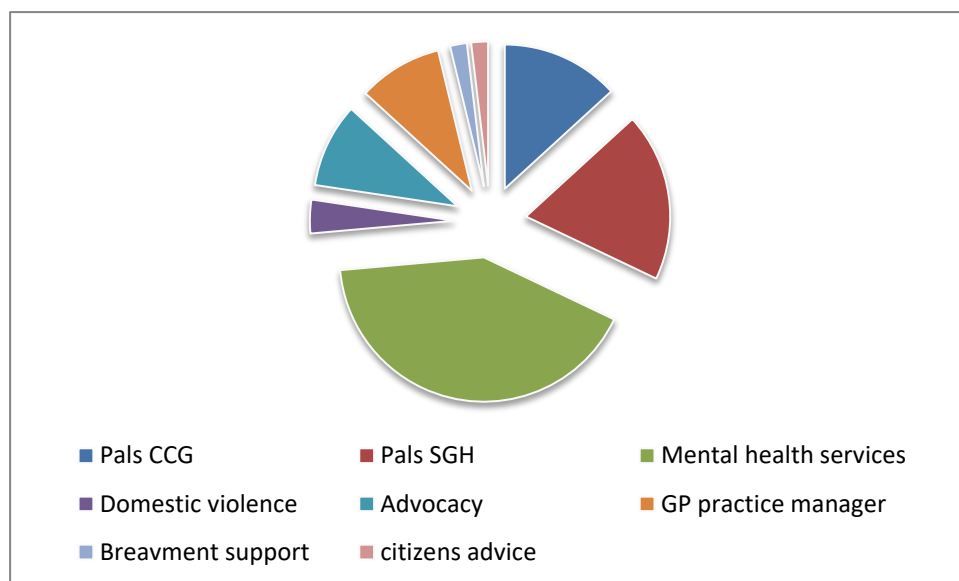
It was decided to cancel the event completely and come back bigger and better in 2021.

Outcome 2 - Peoples understanding of their rights as users of health and social care services will be improved.

Information and signposting

During quarter 1, the majority of the information and signposting that took place was over the telephone from members of the public asking for advice or through the enquiries email.

Through our direct contact we were able to signpost 53 people to a range of services in North Lincolnshire.



We saw an increase in people contacting HWNL for advice about where to go for mental health support during quarter 1.

This was also reflected in the number of visitors to our mental health support page on our website, with 138 people looking for mental health support during this period. This indicates a potential deterioration in people's mental health during the pandemic.

This was closely followed by people looking for advice on drug and alcohol services. During the quarter 121 people visited our alcohol and drugs advice tab.

At the end of quarter 4, we developed a Covid -19 page on the website to provide the most up to date information about the coronavirus to visitors to the website. 383 people visited this page during the quarter.

Overall there were 4105 visitors to our website during quarter 1 which is an increase of 95 since Q4.

Outcome 3- greater patient and public involvement in the work of Healthwatch

Telephone buddy service

The telephone buddy service went from strength to strength during quarter 1 2020.

Our previous volunteer coordinator re-joined the team on a temporary basis during April to help recruit and train new volunteers and match them up with new service user referrals.

Since the start of the project (end of March) until the end of June, 584 calls had been made by our volunteers. The length of calls varied between volunteers, with the average call length being 24 minutes long.

In total 14322 minutes have been spent on calls with service users, which equates to 239 hours, or 9.9 days' worth of calls to people who are isolated and vulnerable during the pandemic.

Some of our service users have now decided they no longer need the service, however overall demand for the service has continued to grow, and those receiving support from us are now requiring longer phone calls. This is despite less restrictive lockdown measures being in place, highlighting a real issue with loneliness and isolation in North Lincolnshire.

	Number of new service users	Amount of time spent on calls
April	24	2776 minutes
May	38	5397 minutes
June	27	6149 minutes

The buddy service was promoted through our social media channels, though our newsletter and distributed via our partners.

We developed a mutual referral pathway with the North Lincolnshire Council Shield team during quarter 1 which meant that the majority of referrals that came into the service were people who had contacted the Council for support during the crisis.

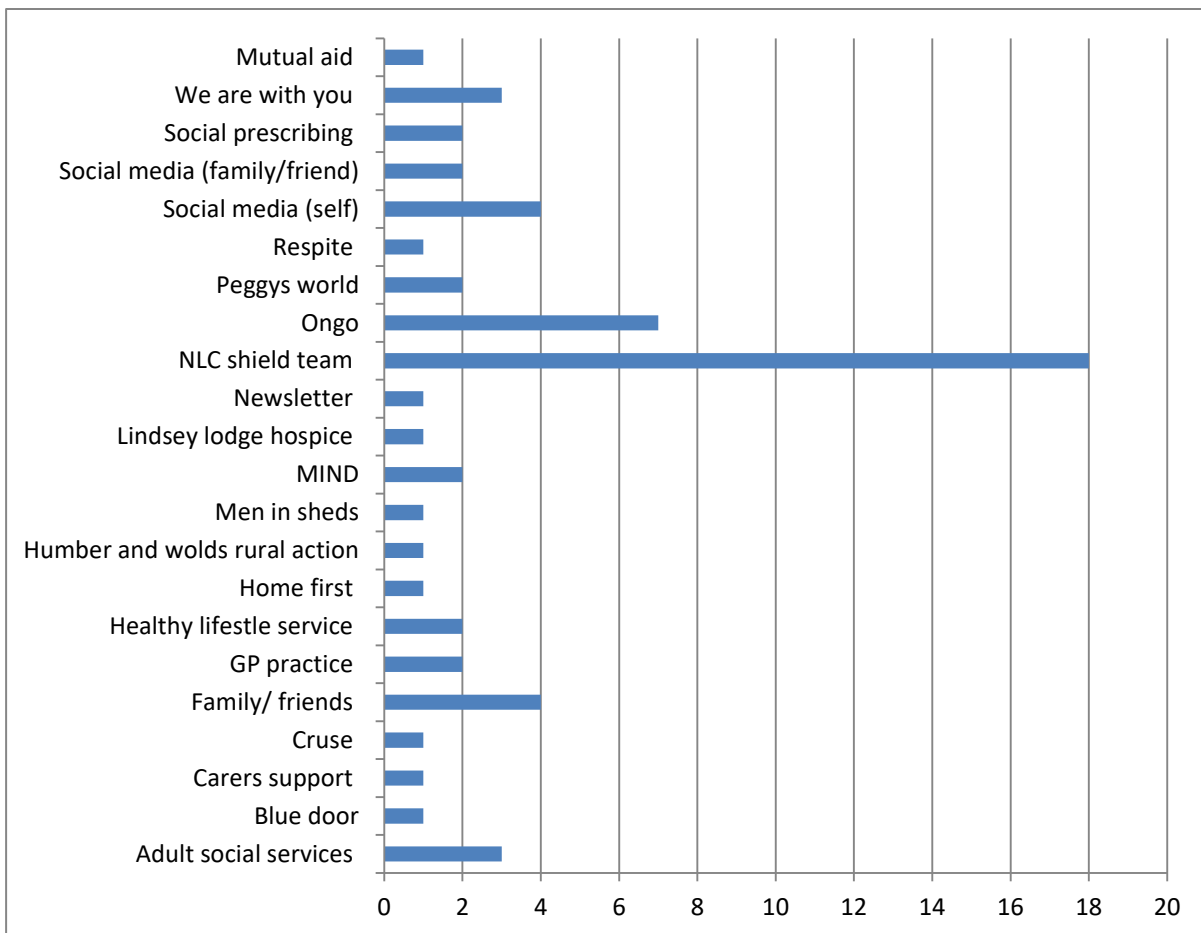
This also meant that we were actively referring people into the North Lincolnshire Council Shield Service if they required help with shopping or prescription collections.

The two way relationship developed with the Council meant that we were able to escalate any safety concerns to the shield team if we were unable to contact a

service user, and a member of the shield team would undertake a welfare check to make sure the person is safe. In total we escalated 10 incidents during quarter 1.

We also received referrals from a number of different organisations, such as the drug and alcohol service and Ongo which shows that we have become recognised across the health and social care sector as the main organisation that has stepped up to offer this much needed service during the outbreak.

Figure 1 Breakdown of referrals by source



As demand increased, the need for volunteers also increased. We worked closely with North Lincolnshire Council to utilise some of the volunteers who had registered with the Council to help the crisis.

Total number of volunteers applied/ engaged with HWNL	61
Total number of volunteers currently active	42
Number of volunteers no longer active (returned to work etc)	8
Number of volunteers not processed	11

All volunteers are supported by the Volunteer Coordinator who keeps in touch regularly via a volunteer WhatsApp group and weekly update emails.

A volunteer satisfaction survey was also completed in quarter 1 to evaluate the recruitment process, the training and support offered and the overall volunteering experience. 17 of our volunteers completed this and all respondents reported positive experiences of volunteering. All volunteers told us they feel well supported and are happy to continue volunteering. 13 respondents told us they were either 'likely' or 'very likely' to continue volunteering in other roles after the pandemic.

Some comments about the service and suggestions for further development:

For those who are not used to supporting vulnerable people, maybe a bit more training. I've done similar work for years so not for me, but I remember how daunting it was the first time I had to ring a stranger and training may make this easier for those that have never done it.

A reference form for the referees would be easier, with questions like "is trustworthy, reliable, good with people etc..." I think a tick box type of form with a space at the end for comments would make it easier for people to quickly provide a reference without having to think what to write.

I can't honestly think of any improvements. The support is excellent, the matches between the callers and the people receiving the calls has been good so I have nothing but praise for the service.

As a result of this feedback we have reviewed the training that we offer and a more in depth package will be rolled out in Q2, including an induction to Healthwatch and our purpose and role. We have also re-evaluated how we request references to help streamline the process.

Service for people with ASD and or autism

During quarter 1 we became part of a regionally funded project with Inclusion North. The 'Keeping people connected' project is an 8 week programme aimed at ensuring people with a learning disability and or autism understands the guidelines around Covid-19 and how to keep safe. This has been operating alongside the telephone buddy service, with the calls made by our core team rather than volunteers.

The support offered to these individuals is based on their level of need and ranges from developing hospital passports and creating easy read guidelines for people with additional needs to understand.

Involvement in this project has been incredibly useful for our team to understand some of the very unique issues that people with LD and / or autism face.

One service user shared their concerns about virtual medical appointments as her communication needs were not being met. She was very anxious about the prospect of a telephone consultation with the rheumatology team as she struggles to communicate well without being able to read facial expressions. She also felt that she would not be taken seriously if she is not able to adequately express her concerns about her health. Our team worked closely with this individual to help her prepare for this appointment, by encouraging her to be clear with the doctor about her communication issues at the beginning of the call and write a list of questions that she would like to ask.

As a result of this feedback we will be working with Cloverleaf Advocacy and the learning disability team at NLaG in Q2 to develop 'virtual' health passports that are specifically designed to help clinicians understand the specific communication needs of these individuals when having virtual hospital appointments.

The Keeping People Connected project is due to finish in quarter two however there is the possibility the project will be extended for a further 8 weeks.

Outcome 4 - Strong and effective relationships with commissioners and a credible voice on the Health and Wellbeing Board

At the beginning of the quarter, many of the usual meetings that were attended by our team were suspended but as time progressed, some of these became operational; again via virtual methods.

- Children and Young People's Partnership
- Health and wellbeing board
- Health and Social Care Standards Board
- Cross sector provider partnership
- Voluntary sector partnership
- Voluntary sector alliance
- Safeguarding adults board
- North Lincolnshire Quality Surveillance Group

The Manager met with Dr Peter Reading from the NLaG Hospital Trust in May to discuss strategic plans for the hospital and an update on the Covid crisis. The Chief Executive provided assurance hospital capacity was able to cope with the

pandemic, and preparations for dealing with a potential second wave. Dr Reading shared the plans for reducing waiting lists and plans for restarting elective surgery.

The Trust had made significant improvements to the waiting list prior to the pandemic and found themselves in the unfortunate position of working reduce this again.

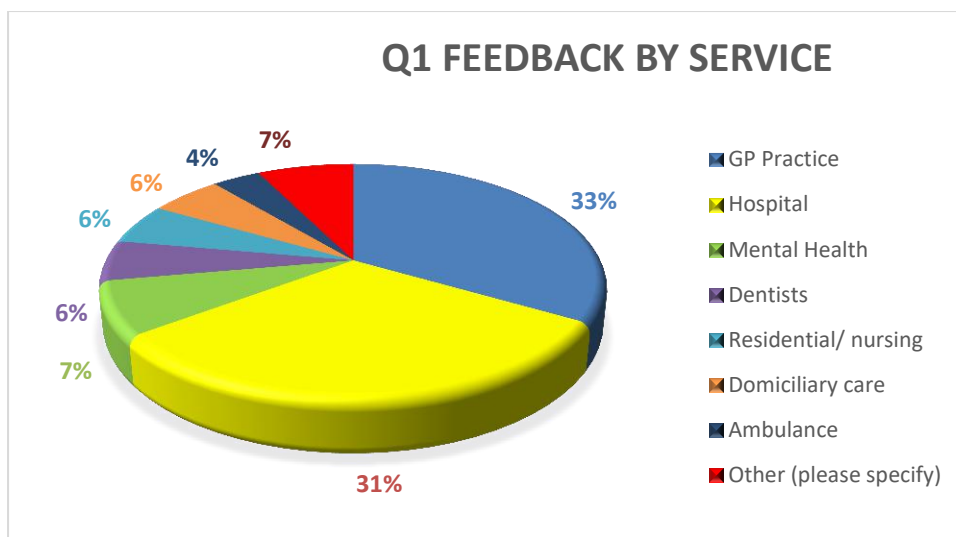
Outcome 5 - Ability to show the impact of HWNL to challenge and speak on behalf of Health and Social care service users.

Feedback

As face to face engagement has not been possible throughout the quarter, receiving feedback has not been as easy in quarter 1.

Our usual general feedback survey was adapted to incorporate Covid-19 issue at the end of quarter 4 and this has a prominent place on our website and has been widely circulated on social media. The daily news report has also been used to remind subscribers on a daily basis that we are keen to hear people's experiences.

The telephone buddy service has also allowed us to pick up any intelligence that we otherwise would not have been able to gather during the pandemic. Although the service is predominantly aimed at reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation, we realised that many of the people who use the service are in contact with local health and care services, and occasionally talk about these experiences to their buddies. We are planning to run a development session with volunteers in quarter 2 for them to understand how to use the calls more effectively to gather intelligence from the person they are supporting in an open and transparent way and encourage more people to speak up about their care.



The patient experience officer feeds any patient experience into a weekly virtual patient experience group with NLaG. This group was developed to meet frequently so that patient feedback is acted on quickly and changes were made quickly during the acute phase of the Covid crisis.

Mental Health and Covid -19

Some of the people registered with the telephone buddy service have told us that their mental health has deteriorated during the pandemic. The Manger shared these views with the voluntary sector alliance, who also reported there had been an increase in mental health issues amongst users of their services. The fact that mental health services were signposted to more frequently in this quarter than previous quarters also shows an increase in demand for support.

It was decided that this issue needed further exploration, so we developed a survey with MIND that investigates the impact of Covid-19 on Mental Health, and looks at any gaps in local service provision.

This survey was rolled out in June and 109 people have so far responded to it. A quick analysis has shown that 59% of respondents have felt that their mental health as deteriorated during the pandemic. This was broken down into three categories:

- People with a longstanding mental health condition (1 year+)
- People with a more recent mental health problem
- People without previous mental health problems

Within all three groups, there had been deterioration in mental health, with the worst affected group being those with recent mental health issues.

In quarter 2 this issue will be investigated further, with focus groups held with members of the public and a wider circulation of the survey.

Outcome 6 - Collective views experiences and needs of local people are made known to Healthwatch England, local overview and scrutiny committees and to local health and social care commissioners and providers

The Healthwatch North Lincolnshire annual report was produced and published in quarter 1. The report is an opportunity to showcase the work of HWNL to the general public and to inform Healthwatch England of the progress made in North Lincolnshire.

In quarter 1 we have also contributed feedback about dentistry to the Yorkshire and Humber Healthwatch network which adds to the collective views on dentistry across the region. Our regional representative shares this intelligence with the NHSEI dental commissioning executive to ensure the voice of people in each area of Yorkshire and Humber is taken into consideration when planning and delivery dental services.

We were asked to contribute intelligence from our Covid-19 experience survey to the Humber Coast and Vale Health and Care Partnership in quarter 1. This information was to contribute to the planning of services in response to Covid-19 on the wider STP/ ICS footprint.

Plans for quarter 2

- Continue the development of the telephone buddy service, including the recruitment and training of new volunteers and pilot an extension of the service to care homes.
- Develop virtual health passports with Cloverleaf Advocacy.
- Continue to investigate the impact of Covid on mental health in North Lincolnshire.
- Publish the cervical screening report.
- Plan a series of virtual enter and view visits in residential care homes.